



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Chair Kahle and Members of the House Health Policy Committee  
**From:** Rebecca Mastee, Policy Advocate  
**Date:** 1 December 2021  
**Re:** Michigan Catholic Conference Support for House Bills 5558-5559

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Michigan Catholic Conference (MCC) offers its support for House Bills 5558-5559. MCC is the official public policy voice of the Catholic Church in our state.

With gratitude, MCC commends Representative Albert and Chair Kahle, for sponsoring this legislation to address a very important issue – the unethical use of aborted babies in medical research. More information is emerging about the industry that has been built around procuring, purchasing, and utilizing aborted fetal remains for research, along with serious questions as to the legality of the methods used in procuring those remains.

Fetal organs obtained from elective abortions must *never* be seen as a standard tool of medical research. Otherwise, this inevitably creates a demand for abortion and suggests that abortion is a necessity to procure human material for research. Research that uses aborted fetal tissue and organs is neither ethical nor necessary. Every abortion is a tragedy. No women should ever feel compelled to have an abortion – for any reason – least of all to provide human organs to researchers.

At the federal level, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has also spoken clearly against research that uses human organs and tissue obtained from abortions. The USCCB has advocated for both the protection of unborn human life and the ethical integrity of medicine and medical research. Ethical alternatives existed before researchers started using human fetal tissue from abortions and ethical alternatives continue to be discovered. The USCCB has noted that “researchers have demonstrated that we can do effective scientific research and develop efficacious clinical treatments without harvesting tissue from aborted babies.”<sup>1</sup> Indeed, between 2019 and 2021, the National Institutes of Health had been discontinuing its use of fetal tissue, instead promoting ethical alternatives in its research, until the change in Presidential Administration.

Excellence in medical research is possible without abortion. House Bills 5558-5559 ensure ethical research alternatives will be prioritized, while making an important statement for medical ethics and the boundaries necessary to respect all human life. MCC encourages your support.

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<sup>1</sup> USCCB, Press Release U.S. Bishops’ Pro-Life Committee Chairman Denounces Reversal of Limits on Human Fetal Tissue Research, April 20, 2021, available at <https://www.usccb.org/news/2021/us-bishops-pro-life-committee-chairman-denounces-reversal-limits-human-fetal-tissue>.